



MayoClinic.com

Tools for healthier lives

Diseases &amp; Conditions | Drugs &amp; Supplements | Treatment Decisions | Healthy Living | Ask a Specialist | Health

SEARCH MAYO

Register

Asthma

RSS ARTICLE SECTIONS

- Introduction
- Signs and symptoms
- Causes
- Risk factors
- When to seek medical advice
- Screening and diagnosis
- Complications
- Treatment
- Prevention
- Self-care
- Coping skills

## Causes

Asthma is probably due to a combination of environmental and genetic factors. You're more likely to develop asthma if it runs in your family and if you're sensitive to environmental allergens or irritants. Early, frequent infections and chronic exposure to secondhand smoke or certain allergens may increase your chances of developing asthma.

Exposure to various allergens and irritants may trigger your asthma symptoms. The following are common things that trigger asthma symptoms:

- Allergens, such as pollen, animal dander or mold
- Cockroaches and dust mites
- Air pollutants and irritants
- Smoke
- Strong odors or scented products or chemicals
- Respiratory infections, including the common cold
- Physical exertion, including exercise
- Strong emotions and stress
- Cold air
- Certain medications, including beta blockers, aspirin and other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs
- Sulfites, preservatives added to some perishable foods
- Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), a condition in which stomach acids back up into your esophagus. GERD may trigger an

### ARTICLE TOOLS

☐ Print this section | All

sections

☐ Email this

☐ Larger type

☐ Reprints and permissions
HOUSECALL Get the latest health news

Enter e-mail address

Sign Up &gt;

&gt; Ask a Specialist &gt;

### ADVERTISEMENT

# New Year New You!

as seen on the "Today" show

MAYO CLINIC DVD ON  
**Heart Health**

Check out these best-sellers and special offers on books and newsletters from Mayo Clinic.

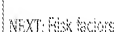
- Mayo Clinic Book of Alternative Medicine
- Healthy Living set - Buy 2 books and get 1 free!
- Get your free mail issue of Health Letter now!

asthma attack or make an attack worse.

- Sinusitis



PREVIOUS



NEXT: Risk factors

More titles from MayoClinic.com Bookstore ...

Advertising and sponsorship policy

## MORE ON THIS TOPIC

- Double trouble: The link between allergies and asthma

## RELATED

- Beta blockers: Are they safe if you have asthma?
- Occupational asthma
- Symptom Checker
- Exercise-induced asthma
- Video: An asthma attack

MayoClinic.com Bookstore

- Mayo Clinic Fitness for EveryBody® (Softcover)

By Mayo Clinic Staff

Jun 1, 2006

© 1998-2006 Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER). All rights reserved. A single copy of these materials may be reprinted for noncommercial personal use only. "Mayo," "Mayo Clinic," "MayoClinic.com," "EmbodyHealth," "Reliable facts for healthier lives," "Enhance your life," and the triple shield Mayo Clinic logo are trademarks of Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research.

0366002

About this site \* Site help \* Contact us \* e-Newsletter \* Site map \* Reprints and permissions

Privacy policy updated Oct 4, 2006

Terms and conditions of use updated Sep 26, 2007

LEGAL CONDITIONS AND TERMS OF USE APPLICABLE TO ALL USERS OF THIS SITE. ANY USE OF THIS SITE CONSTITUTES YOUR AGREEMENT TO THESE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF USE.

© 1998-2006 Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. All rights reserved.